

BELMONT POLICE DEPARTMENT



OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING MANUAL

As a police officer, you have the additional benefit of knowing first-hand what information you will need on the street as a responder. However, being out of your element in the communications center, you may find yourself feeling a bit awkward. The following information is taken from the dispatch training manual. It has been edited to pertain to officers who work for short periods in the communication center. Some of the information will be common sense or things you have already learned, but you may find it useful.

Expectations

Call Taking

For each call you receive, you should strive to do the following:

- Ask for and properly record the caller's phone number
- Obtain the correct location of the incident
- Attempt to get the full name and address of the RP
- Properly type-code the event
- Accurately reflect in CAD the information given by the RP
- Obtain a suspect description
- Vehicle information and direction of travel (use the CYMBAL method)
- Gather officer safety information (weapons, premise history, run out involved parties)
- Appropriately transfer or refer any calls not the responsibility of our agency

Radio Broadcasting

During each radio broadcast, you should do the following:

- Listen attentively, understand or clarify messages received from units using appropriate terminology
- Event dispatched within appropriate timeframe, with any delays noted in CAD
- Maintain accurate status of units in CAD in a timely manner
- Maintain a calm and professional demeanor (refrain from inappropriate traffic)
- Proper use of channel restrictions
- Perform appropriate status checks
- Send appropriate number of units based on policy, premise history flag, or extraordinary events
- Ensure officer safety by prompting units for updates to address officer safety issues (DOT, descriptions, etc)
- Requested notifications are made promptly and noted in the incident
- During officer initiated activity, assign appropriate cover units and document accurately in the incident

RIMS

Proper use of the RIMS system is crucial – information you enter becomes legal record!

- Document information in the proper format
- Record all information as given by field units and reporting parties
- Ensure the location verifies on incidents within city limits
- Properly utilize system resources to locate information
- Document information directly into CAD as it is given to avoid time delay
- Report any system errors or erroneous information to the system administrator
- Each call should have a brief summary of the incident in the description field

Specifics of Call Taking

Call Taking

There are several differences between dealing with someone in person on the street and handling citizens over the telephone. First, your complete contact is recorded. Also, being that the phone is generally the first point of contact with the police department, some callers can be quite agitated. It may be because they are just that way, or the circumstances they find themselves in cause them to be less than cordial. Whatever it may be, as a call-taker it is your job to maintain a professional conversation. Lastly, when you use a telephone, you lose some of the communication you get with personal contact, such as body language or facial expression. You may find that saying something in person will be interpreted one way, while saying the exact same thing over a telephone could be taken differently.

Voice Quality

Have you ever stopped to wonder how you would sound if you could call yourself? You would find that speech has four important characteristics:

- A) Pleasant
- B) Distinct
- C) Volume
- D) Speed

Answer every call with a pleasant voice – never let the previous difficult caller influence the way you answer the next call.

Be distinct, if you mumble or your volume is low you will have to repeat yourself and waste valuable time. Project authority and knowledge, backed up by a certainty of what you are telling the caller. If you are hesitant or seem unsure, the caller will probably question your answers or your ability to help.

If you do not know the answer to give the caller, put them on hold and ask the watch commander or person in charge of the area in which you have the question. If no one is available, get the callers information and tell them you will get an answer and get back to them as soon as possible. Make sure you do the follow up and call the person back to maintain the public's confidence.

Monitor your speed so the caller will not have to ask you to repeat yourself.

Use plain, everyday language with the public – never use Ten Codes, legal terms or law enforcement jargon.

Answering Priority

Phones are to be answered in order of priority as follows (left to right on the Vesta screen):

First are the three 9-1-1 lines

Second are the two seven-digit emergency lines and the dialer alarm line.

Third would be the micro line

Fourth would be the business lines

Dispatchers must answer all emergency line calls immediately and determine if an emergency exists. If so, handle the emergency. If not, transfer the person to the proper department or agency, or ask the person to hold. If you have several non-emergency lines ringing, answer the phone and immediately ask, "Do you have an emergency?" If not, put the caller on hold and check the next line. Many emergency calls come in on non-emergency lines, so those should never go unanswered.

Non-English Speaking Callers

If a caller on emergency or business lines does not speak English (or another language you are fluent in), the call should be transferred to the language translator. When you transfer to the language translation service you must identify your agency and then if possible, advise the translators what language the caller speaks. Stay on the line and ask the caller questions via the translator. Fellow employees may also have language skills, so use them as a resource if available.

Collect Calls

Belmont Police Department will accept collect calls in certain circumstances. With the advent of cellular phones it is rare to receive a collect call, but it does happen occasionally. You may accept the call.

Questions to Ask

There are basic questions that apply to almost every call. If you have obtained the answers to these questions, you have acquired the information needed for the officer to respond.

Where?

Where did the incident occur? By establishing this fact early in the questioning, you may find the call is not in Belmont's jurisdiction. If it is not in Belmont's jurisdiction, transfer the caller to the appropriate agency. The only exception to this is a missing person report. By law, if we receive a report of a missing person, we must handle the call regardless of where they are missing from or where the caller is calling from.

What?

What is happening? In order to prioritize the call you need to know why the caller is calling the police.

When?

The time element greatly impacts the priority of the call. Ascertain quickly if the crime is in progress, just occurred, or occurred some time ago. From the above information, you should be able to determine if this is a high priority, a secondary priority, or a "cold" call.

Who?

Who is the caller and who is the suspect? If the caller saw a suspect, or knows who they are, this can make a difference in someone being apprehended. Be sure to find out where the suspect is or the direction they fled. Get this information and a description broadcast to the officers as soon as possible.

Weapons?

An important officer safety issue is whether or not any weapons may have been used, seen, or inferred. Also, are there any weapons on the premises where the officer will be responding? A frightened citizen with a weapon can be just as dangerous as a suspect with one. The kind of weapons and their locations should be passed onto the officers immediately.

Why?

Does the caller know why the incident is happening? If the caller knows the suspect, does caller know why the suspect is acting the way (s)he is or doing what (s)he is doing? (Example: Does the suspect take medications that (s)he may have discontinued using, or does (s)he have a history of mental problems?)

Police Radio Dispatching

As a police officer you use the radio all the time, so it should be no mystery to you. The radio console operates differently than your handheld radio. It is nothing you will notice as an occasional user, and your trainer will explain all the functions of the different channels, volume controls, monitoring responsibility, etc.

As an officer, your reaction to radio traffic is different from that of a dispatcher. If an officer were to call for code 3 cover, a dispatcher will send available units and coordinate resources to help. Your reaction may be to want to go running to help. You will have to adjust to the new role you take on when working in dispatch. Below are some helpful guidelines for specific situations you may encounter.

Delays in Dispatching

In most cases where a cold crime is being reported, the citizens do not expect an immediate response. However, after 30 minutes, many citizens worry that we've "forgotten" them or lost their incident.

To reassure them, the dispatcher should attempt to call back the victim if you can't assign an officer after 30 minutes. Tell the person "I'm sorry, but the officer is on another call. We will send him as soon as he is available." Most citizens will understand. If they do have a problem waiting, check with the Watch Commander (who is aware of the officers' caseloads) to see if another officer can take the call. Try not to provide specific wait times, because you never know what may come up in the mean time. It is better to say you are not exactly sure, and offer to call the citizen when the officer is freed up to handle the call.

Multiple Transmissions

Occasionally units will attempt to use their portable radio at the same time. Dispatch should say, "multiple units, P8 go ahead" to the unit that is heard first, then "other unit with traffic?" If you hear a unit who has emergency traffic, but can't make out who it is, you can say, "multiple units, unit going 11-86, go ahead."

Victims, RP's

The call may contain a victim's name, a reporting party or simply "refused." Sometimes a name, address and telephone number will be placed into the call, but the person requests no contact. You should make it clear to the responding officer(s) if the person specifically does not want contact.

Special Situations

Pursuits

Once a pursuit is established, tell the pursuing officer to "go to the green" so the sheriff's office and other jurisdictions can copy the pursuit and join it if needed. Further dispatching of the pursuit can be given over to San Mateo County Communications on the Green Channel. The most effective way to do that is by transmitting on the Green, "County from Belmont on the Green, we're coming on with a pursuit, northbound 101 from Ralston, on a 10851, plate 3SAM123, a green Honda Accord." They will then proceed with your units in the pursuit.

Be careful when an officer calls a "Failure to Yield" rather than a pursuit. The two are not the same, as you know, and should be called by their proper names. The dispatcher should not interchange the terms, but stick with what the officer chooses to call it. A pursuit usually involves a reckless driving pattern and evasive action, and is almost certainly criminal in nature. A failure to yield is just that – refusal to yield to the officer's vehicle. A failure to yield may be criminal in nature or the result of inattention.

Common Law Enforcement Abbreviations

(these may help speed the entry of your CAD notes, or interpret what dispatchers have written...)

A/F = Across from
APS = Aging & Adult Services
ATC = Attempt to Contact
ATL = Attempt to Locate
C&B = Conscious and breathing
C/B = Call Back
CK = Check
CPS = Child Protective Services
DOT = Direction of Travel
ETA = Estimated Time of Arrival
EtOH = Has Been Drinking (fire)
HBD = Has Been Drinking (PD)
IFO = In front of
J = Juvenile
JEO = Just East of
JNO = Just North of
JSO = Just South of
JWO = Just West of
LSW = Last Seen Wearing

NFD = No Further Description
NFI = No Further Information
O/O = Out of
PHS = Animal Control
RCL = Roadway Cleared
RESP = Responsible
RO = Registered Owner
RP = Reporting Party
RTI = Refused to Identify
SUBJ = Subject
SUSP = Suspect
TRO = To the Rear Of
TRO = Temporary Restraining Order
UNK = Unknown
UTL = Unable to Locate
VEH = Vehicle
X = Female
YO = Years Old
YOA = Years of Age

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

ADMINISTRATIVE ORIENTATION		
<u>AGENCY FORMS:</u> The officer will understand the purpose and use of departmental forms most frequently used in the communications function:	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
A. Dispatch Card (to use as backup)		
B. Sick leave procedure		
C. Media Bulletin		
D. BOL / Warrants / Hot Sheet- in RIMS Ready Reference		
E. Repossession Incidents in RIMS		
F. Shift Bulletin in RIMS		
G. Criminal History tracking- Log Book		
H. Administrative Message tracking – Log Book		
I. Vehicle Release		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

EQUIPMENT ORIENTATION		
COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT: The officer will know the purpose and understand the functions of equipment used and the lines of responsibility for the maintenance of the equipment.	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
The officer will understand the purpose and demonstrate the ability to use and/or the efficient operation of the following:		
A. Microphone		
B. Radio controls / console		
C. Channels		
D. Volume control		
E. Alert tone		
F. Priority marker (Code 33 tone)		
G. CCC Button (drops PD1 from an in-progress broadcast)		
H. Microwave line		
I. IRR		
J. TTY – hearing impaired – procedure		
K. 9-1-1 / Phone system equipment		
L. Time stamp machine		
M. PCMSS CLETS access (on PC)		
N. Traffic Cameras		
O. C*Cure card reader system		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS		
<u>TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS OVERVIEW:</u> The officer will know and understand the teletype communications systems used in the communications center.	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
CLETS (California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System)		
User responsibility		
Liability		
Access responsibility		
Stolen Vehicle System (SVS)		
Automated Boat System (ABS)		
Automated Firearms System (AFS)		
Automated Property System (APS)		
Wanted Persons System (WPS)		
Domestic Violence Restraining Order System (DVROS)		
Supervised Release File (SRF)		
Criminal History System (CHS)		
Missing/Unidentified Persons System (MUPS)		
Mental Health Firearms Prohibition System (MHFPS)		
Armed Prohibited Persons System (APPS)		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS		
TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS OVERVIEW: (continued)	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
The officer will know and understand and/or demonstrate the ability to access information in the following files:		
Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)		
Vehicle Registration		
Driver License		
Occupational Licensing		
Parking Citation		
The officer will know that we have the ability to access information in the nationwide system.		
NCIC (National Crime Information Center)		
Federal Network		
Law enforcement agencies		
Security		
Responsibility		
Liability		
Vehicle file		
License plate file		
Boat file		
Article file		
Gun file		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS		
TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS OVERVIEW: (continued)	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
NCIC (continued)		
Wanted persons file		
Violent felon file (VGTOF) = Violent Gang and Terrorist Organization File		
Missing person file		
Foreign fugitive file		
Unidentified persons file		
US Secret Service file		
Interstate Identification Index (III)		
Securities file		
ORI file		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS		
TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS OVERVIEW: (continued)	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
The officer will know that we have the ability to access, input, retrieve information, and send messages in the nationwide system:		
NLETS (National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System)		
Vehicle registration		
Driver license		
Boat registration		
Snowmobile registration		
Hazardous material (HAZMAT)		
Aircraft tracking (FAA)		
Aircraft registration (FAA)		
INTERPOL		
Canadian interface		
Criminal history		
Administrative messages		
Interstate broadcasts		
Help files		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS		
<u>TELETYPE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS OVERVIEW:</u> (continued)	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
The officer will know that we have the ability to access, input, retrieve, and send messages in the nationwide system.		
LEDS (Oregon)		
Driver license		
Guns		
Stolen vehicle		
Vehicle / Boat registration		
Wanted persons		
Articles		
Miscellaneous		
Automated Warrant System (AWS)		
The officer will understand that we have the ability to access, input, retrieve information, and send teletype messages in the County system:		
Sheriff's Record (SR) – also known as CJIS		
How to get the ID number		
SMCS mask		
Two types of information available		
SMARTS		
Masks		
TN, TD, TG transactions		
CDL inquiry		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

OPERATIONAL SKILLS AND PROCEDURES		
BASIC OPERATIONAL INFORMATION:	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
PRIORITY: The officer will develop the skills necessary to prioritize calls. Calls for service and assistance from both the public and field units will be screened for the following:		
Which incoming telephone lines are considered emergency lines to be answered immediately		
<u>Any</u> incoming line may be a request for help in a life or death situation		
All callers expect and are entitled to some action which falls within the dispatching officer's responsibility		
The first action is determination of the nature of the call, allowing for handling of multiple incoming calls in order of importance (priority)		
Recognizing that calls for service must take precedence over calls for information or advice		
To the public, all calls for service are important. Tact is imperative in explaining the importance of units' response to critical calls first		
The caller is re-contacted with a reasonable explanation for delays in response		
Low priority calls are "screened" for handling via telephone only. This is accomplished in a diplomatic manner, ensuring citizen satisfaction		
Channel control during pursuits must be handled according to agency and county procedure		

OFFICER'S DISPATCH TRAINING GUIDE

CAD and RMS		
RIMS Computer System: The officer will demonstrate the ability to navigate the RIMS system via practice in the RIMS Training database:	INSTRUCTOR'S INITIALS AND DATE	
	INSTRUCTED IN AND/OR DEMONSTRATED BY	KNOWLEDGE OR ABILITY DEMONSTRATED BY TRAINEE
<u>CAD</u>		
Officer initiated events		
Calls for service		
Reporting party information		
Proper format of phone numbers		
Adding people/vehicles to incidents		
Use of shortcuts and command line		
Searches		
Premise and location lookups		
Messaging		
Running CLETS through CAD		

